

The Register of Swiss Surnames

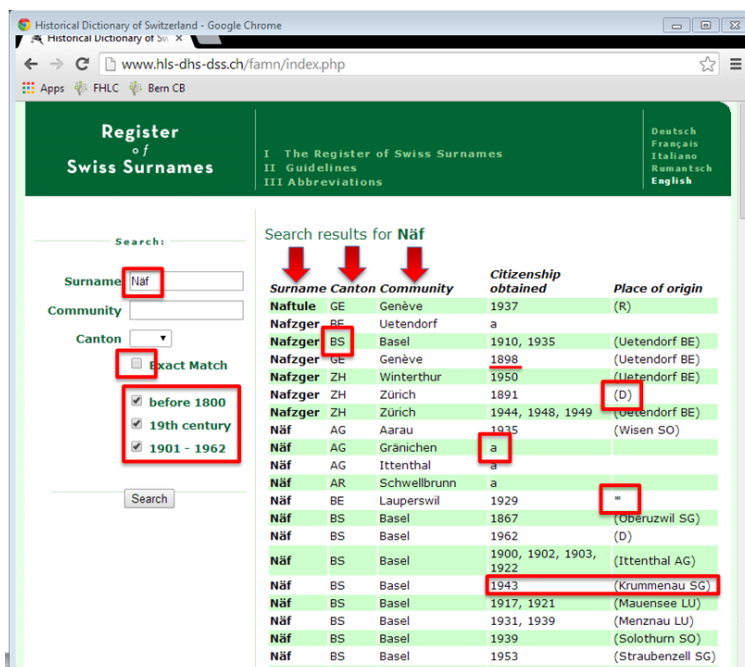
To access the Register of Swiss Surnames, use one of the following options:

- Google “Register of Swiss Surnames” – it should be the first option that appears
- Access the FamilySearch Wiki page for Switzerland, and select the second link under “Research Tools”

Search Tips:

- Diacritical marks (umlauts, accent marks) are treated as straight characters; a search for “Muller” will return results for Muller and Müller.
- The search is exact. A search for “Mueller” will not return any results for Müller. A search for “von Tobel” will not return results for “Vontobel”.
- Partial spellings are accepted, unless the “exact match” box is marked. Thus, a search for “Näf” will return Näf, as well as Naftule, Nafzger, etc.
- The initial letter is not umlauted, but spelled out. Thus, a search for Äppli should be entered as “Aeppli”.
- The results list is alphabetized, with any umlauted characters at the end of the alphabet. Thus, a search for Muller will return all Muller results first, followed by Müller.
- List is alphabetized first by canton, then by location.
- Location searches will return results alphabetically by surname, not by location.

This is a glance of a typical search result. The letter “a” indicates citizenship prior to 1800. Each canton has a two-letter code (i.e. ZH = Zürich). The letter “b” indicates citizenship between 1800 and 1900. The place of origin indicates location of previous citizenship. If previous citizenship was in Switzerland, the town will be given, as well as the canton; otherwise, a letter indicating country of citizenship will be given. For help with abbreviations, click on “Abbreviations.”



The screenshot shows the 'Register of Swiss Surnames' search interface. The search term 'Näf' is entered in the 'Surname' field. The search results are displayed in a table with the following columns: Surname, Canton, Community, Citizenship obtained, and Place of origin. The results are filtered by 'before 1800' and '19th century'.

Surname	Canton	Community	Citizenship obtained	Place of origin
Naftule	GE	Genève	1937	(R)
Nafzger	BE	Uetendorf	a	
Nafzger	BS	Basel	1910, 1935	(Uetendorf BE)
Nafzger	GE	Genève	1898	(Uetendorf BE)
Nafzger	ZH	Winterthur	1950	(Uetendorf BE)
Nafzger	ZH	Zürich	1891	(D)
Nafzger	ZH	Zürich	1944, 1948, 1949	(Uetendorf BE)
Näf	AG	Aarau	1935	(Wisen SO)
Näf	AG	Gränichen	a	
Näf	AG	Ittenthal	a	
Näf	AR	Schwellbrunn	a	
Näf	BE	Lauperswil	1929	
Näf	BS	Basel	1867	(Oberuzwil SG)
Näf	BS	Basel	1962	(D)
Näf	BS	Basel	1900, 1902, 1903, 1922	(Ittenthal AG)
Näf	BS	Basel	1943	(Krummenau SG)
Näf	BS	Basel	1917, 1921	(Mauensee LU)
Näf	BS	Basel	1931, 1939	(Menzau LU)
Näf	BS	Basel	1939	(Solothurn SO)
Näf	BS	Basel	1953	(Straubenzell SG)

Uses for this resource include:

- If the exact community of citizenship is unknown, a search for the surname can help to limit the parishes for an area search. This works particularly well for unusual surnames.
- A partial name search (i.e. "Sturz") will return all results beginning with the letters typed in. This can assist in surnames that may have been Americanized or changed.
- The results can be limited by canton by selecting a canton from the drop-down menu.
- Results can be limited by time period by selecting the time period requested. This is particularly useful for common surnames like Meyer or Müller.
- If the surname originates from another town or country, this is indicated on the registry.
- By searching for a specific community, all surnames will be returned in the results. This can aid research when surnames are difficult to read, but the location is known.
- Identifying biographies for well-known Swiss individuals.

Limitations of this resource include:

- Exact search options only. There are no wild card searches.
- There is no alphabetical list, as found in the print version.
- The surnames recorded are a snapshot of surnames in Switzerland as of the year 1962, meaning that:
 - Surnames that died out or 'daughtered' out before 1962 do not show up
 - Municipalities annexed before 1962 or created after 1962 will not show up in the community search
 - Citizenships acquired after 1962 are not listed

ACTIVITY:

Fill in the blanks with the answers to the following questions:

1. Do a search for the surname "Meyer." Notice that the surname has a lot of returns. List three ways you can limit the results to a more manageable list: _____

2. Do a search for the surname "Rousseau," and answer the following questions:
 - a. In what communities do Rousseau individuals hold citizenship? _____

 - b. For whom does a biographical entry exist?

3. You're researching the family tree of the famous tennis player Roger Federer. List the five communities (and cantons) in which you'd start your search: _____

4. Choose the name of your favorite Swiss chocolate maker (i.e. Lindt, Cailler, Tobler, Frey, Sprüngli, etc.). Where does the surname originate?